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NEDL TRANSFER



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Stefano **MATER DOLOROSA.**
JAMES CRONIN: Lechrymosa.

Paul Delarocche.

tabat ater

HYMN OF THE SORROWS OF MARY

TRANSLATED BY

ABRAHAM COLES, M. D., PH. D.

With Photograph



NEW YORK
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1866

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PROEM.

THE celebrated Passion Hymn, the STABAT MATER, is so constantly associated with the Dies Iræ that to mention the one is to suggest the other. It has been thought, therefore, that a Translation of this Prosa likewise, made as literal as possible, might be acceptable to some readers, and form a not unsuitable appendage to the present volume, by supplying a ready means of comparison between two productions, about which, down to this day even, there has been a difference of opinion as to which should be awarded the palm of superiority.

It is hardly necessary to say that reference is here had to their lyrical merits only ; for while the devout Protestant finds nothing in the Judgment Hymn to jar with his own religious convictions, he is necessarily offended in the Stabat Mater by a devotion he

believes misdirected and idolatrous, in the adoration which it pays to the Virgin. He is aware, however, that in the formation of a critical estimate of the two, theological considerations have no right to enter ; and certainly the most zealous Romanist will be constrained to admit that there has been no backwardness evinced on the part of those who are not of his faith to do ample justice to the lyric excellence of the latter. Some have gone so far as to place it above its great rival, but this is not the general judgment, nor is it ours.

Beautiful it undoubtedly is, and powerful in its pathos beyond almost anything that has ever been written ; but it is nevertheless true (and the same indeed may be said of the *Dies Iræ* likewise) that it owes much of its power to make us admire and weep to the transcendent nature of its theme. Beyond controversy, the most affecting spectacle ever exhibited to the gaze of the universe, was that witnessed on Mount Calvary. That amazing scene — Jesus on the cross and his mother standing near — had been, of course, a familiar object of contemplation to all Christian hearts, centuries before the

author wrote. His chief business therefore would be not to originate but reproduce.

Evidently the key-note of the Hymn is struck in the two first lines, of which the language is wholly borrowed (bating the epithets, which are not in the manner of the sacred writers) from the Evangelist John, as found in the Latin version: *Stabat juxta crucem mater ejus*. This brief but wonderfully suggestive sentence, furnishes an outline which the poorest imagination would be capable of filling up in a degree. Every mother's heart, for example, would suffice to tell what an abyss of tears must have gone to make up that hiatus in the narrative, which leaves solely to inference what were the feelings of her, who, without comprehending the mystery, stood there gazing upward on the agonized face and writhing form of her divine Son, through the long hours of mortal anguish during which he hung upon the cross.

But however spontaneous and natural, — however true, beautiful, and even poetic, — and however vivid the emotions of sorrow, terror, and pity, arising out of these instinctive and uninstructed perceptions,

there is a vagueness as well as vividness, and a resulting incapacity to express clearly and adequately what is so genuinely felt. The ability to do this is rare, and rarer still the poetic faculty, whereby the unwritten melody of the heart is accommodated to all lips and sung in all ears. To say that the author of the Stabat Mater possessed this power and achieved this triumph is to bestow upon him and his work the highest praise.

Rude though he be, and a stammerer of barbarous Latin, he gives undeniable evidence of being a true poet. He has clairvoyance and second sight. The distant and the past are made to him a virtual here and now. He is in Italy, but he is also in Judea. He lives in the thirteenth century, but is an eyewitness of the crucifixion in the beginning of the first. He has immediate vision. All that is transpiring on Golgotha is distinctly pictured on the retina of his mind's eye. And by the light which is in him he photographs what he sees for the use of others. His *ecce!* is no pointless indication, but an actual showing. The wail he utters is a veritable echo of that which goes up from the cross. Everything is true to nature and to life.

The Hymn consists of two parts. The first four verses give a description of the situation and character of the actors in the drama, as pictorially powerful as scripturally just. From this fruitful source have come all the Mater Dolorosas of the Painters. It is assumed, in accordance with the belief of the Fathers, that the prophecy of Simeon: "A sword shall pass through thy own soul also," had then its proper fulfilment. In the remaining six verses, the writer henceforth disflattished with the *rôle* of a spectator, seeks to identify himself with the tragic scene; prays that he may be permitted to bear a part, not in the way of sympathy merely, but of suffering also, and this too, the same both in kind and degree; that, enduring stripe for stripe, wound for wound, there might be to him in every stage of the Redeemer's passion, groan answering to groan.

It is now that the Franciscan appears quite as much as the Christian. Even when, as in the 8th verse, he quotes St. Paul (who speaks of "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus"), he is evidently thinking of St. Francis. He would fain have repeated the miracle of the "Stigmata" in his

own person, — have an actual and visible reproduction of the print of the nails and the spear in his own hands and feet and side. As “plagas” in the last line of the same verse is used not unfrequently in the sense, not so much of wounds as the marks and appearances left by wounds, it would correspond very exactly with the *stigmata* named in the legend, and most likely, in the author’s use of it, it was intended as a synonym. The possibility of such a literalness, however incredible to us, would not be so to him.

This Hymn is full of the implied merit of suffering, — its meritoriousness in itself. And this is probably one of the reasons why it became such a favorite with the Flagellants, otherwise called Brethren of the Cross (*Crucifrates*) and Cross-Bearers (*Cruciferi*), penitents who, in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries went about in procession day and night, travelling everywhere, naked to the waist, with heads covered with a white cap or hood, whence they received likewise the appellation of *Dealbatores*, singing penitential psalms, and whipping themselves until the blood flowed. By their means it was that the knowledge of this Hymn was first carried to almost every country in Europe.

The authorship of the *Stabat Mater*, like that of the *Dies Iræ*, has been the subject of dispute. It has been variously ascribed—to Pope Innocent III., but backed by no evidence whatever; to one of the Gregories, (either the 9th, 10th, or 11th, which, is not stated,) on the authority of the old Florentine historian Antoninus, who lived in the fifteenth century; to John XXII., on the faith of the Genoese Chancellor and historian, Georgius Stella, who wrote a few years earlier than the last named, dying in 1420. The text, as supplied by him, the oldest perhaps extant, differs but little from that of the *Missale Romanum*, except that it contains three more verses. Others have referred its paternity, contrary to all probability, to St. Bernard. Dismissing all these as conjectures unsupported by proof, it is now generally conceded, that evidence both external and internal makes it wellnigh certain that the Hymn was the work of a Franciscan friar, a junior contemporary as well as brother of the author of *Dies Iræ*, named Jacobus de Benedictis, commonly called Jacopone, that is, the great Jacob. This latter name, it seems, was originally designed as a kind of nickname; the

syllabic suffix, *oné*, meaning in Italian great, having been added by scoffing contemporaries by way of derision, on account of the strangeness of his appearance and behavior. Indeed, if we may credit the stories told by Wadding, the Irish historian of the order, himself one of the number, his conduct at times so far exceeded the bounds of ordinary fanatical extravagance, as to be totally irreconcilable with the possession of right reason. Wadding expressly says that he was subject to fits of insanity, leading him at one time to enter the public market-place naked, with a saddle on his back and a bridle in his mouth, going on all fours; and at another, after anointing himself with oil, and rolling himself in feathers of various colors, to make his appearance suddenly, in this unseemly and hideous guise, in the midst of a gay assembly gathered together at the house of his brother on the occasion of his daughter's marriage, — and this too, in disregard of previous precautionary entreaties of friends, who, apprehensive, it seems, at the time they invited him that he might be guilty of some crazy manifestation or other, had begged him not to do anything to disturb the wedding festivities, but to behave as an ordinary citizen.

The shocking circumstances under which he lost a pious and beloved wife (the fall of a scaffold upon which a large number of females were seated witnessing some spectacle), and the discovery after death that she wore a girdle of hair around her naked body as a means of mortification to the flesh, affected him, it is said, to such a degree, that he immediately resolved to abandon the world, and devote the remainder of his days to the severest penances. He accordingly gave up all his civil honors, and divided his estate among the poor. Uniting himself to one of the existing orders, he now went abroad as a monk, clothed in rags, and practising all manner of ascetic severities beyond what was required of him by the rules of his order.

It is charitable to suppose that the shock of his domestic calamity, while it awakened his religious sensibilities, had the effect at the same time of unsettling his reason, causing partial insanity. It is in no wise inconsistent with this supposition, that he was able to write poems of such excellence as the *Stabat Mater*, and that other one ascribed to him by Wadding: "*Cur mundus militat sub vana gloria*," &c.,

since it is well known that mental unsoundness on some one point is not necessarily incompatible with the normal exercise of the general powers of the mind. This medical fact was not so well understood in his time as now ; and when at the end of ten years he desired to be received by the Minorites, and they hesitated on account of his reputed insanity, their scruples were overcome by reading his work "On Contempt of the World," conceiving that it was impossible that an insane man could write so excellent a book. This would seem to have been a prose work, written probably in his own Italian vernacular, and therefore not to be confounded with the Hymn just referred to, which usually bears likewise the title of "De Contemptu Mundi."

As a Minorite he was not willing to become a priest, only a lay-brother. Very severe against himself, he was, says Wadding, always full of desire to imitate Christ and suffer for Him. In an ecstasy he imagined at times that he saw Him with his bodily eyes, and believed that Jesus often conversed with him, — calling him dearest Jacob. Very frequently he was seen fighting ; sometimes weeping, sometimes

finging, sometimes embracing trees, and exclaiming, "O sweet Jesus! O gracious Jesus! O beloved Jesus!" Once when weeping loudly, on being asked the cause, he answered: "Because Love is not loved." This fine saying is not unworthy of the author of the Stabat Mater.

For determining the genuineness of love he gives these searching tests. "I cannot know positively that I love, yet I have some good marks of it. Among others, it is a sign of love to God when I ask the Lord for something and He does it not, and I love Him notwithstanding more than before. If He does contrary to that which I seek for in my prayer, and I love him twofold more than before, it is a sign of right love. Of love to my neighbor I have this sign: namely, that when he injures me I love him not less than before. Did I love him less, it would prove that I had loved not him previously but myself." In this acute appreciation of the signs and symptoms of true love, he gives evidence certainly of no want of skill in spiritual diagnosis; and were he equally sound and discriminating in all parts of Christian doctrine and experience as in this, it might have been quite

safe to trust him with the cure of souls. It may be that his tests are too severe and superhuman, and so far erroneous.

On the subjugation of the senses he allegorizes in this wise: "A very beautiful virgin had five brothers, and all were very poor. And the virgin had a precious jewel of great worth. One brother was a guitar-player, the second a painter, the third a cook, the fourth a spice dealer, the fifth a pimp. Each was willing to use blandishments to get the stone. The first was willing to play, and so on. But she said: What shall I do when the music has ceased? In short, she remained firm, and gave the jewel to none. At length a great king came, who was willing to raise her to be his bride, and give her eternal life if she would present him with the stone. Whereupon she says: How can I, O my sovereign, to such grace refuse the stone; and so she gave it him." It is plain that by the brothers are meant the Five Senses; by the virgin, the Soul; and by the precious jewel, the Will.

With his severe principles and severer ascetic life, Jacopone could not fail to earnestly denounce the

corruptions of his time in general, and especially the licentious manners, wickedness, and debaucheries of the priesthood, and the deeply sunken condition of the Church. Boniface III., who, prior to his elevation to the papal chair, had lived in friendly relations with Jacopone, having been deeply offended by some sharp censures directed against him, threw him into prison, — at the same time suspended over him the excommunication. Boniface one day passing the cell where Jacopone was, asked scornfully, “When will you come out?” He answered, “When you come in.” Boniface’s own imprisonment and unhappy end in 1303 set him at liberty.

It is related likewise how he baffled Satanic craft by superior craftiness of his own; but the details of these temptations are so childish and ridiculous that it would not be profitable to quote. Doubtless it is more fitting to weep than to laugh over the frenzies and follies of such a man, —

“To see that noble and most sovereign reason
Like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh.”

His whole history gives a melancholy but instructive insight into the prevalent fanaticism and dark-

ness of the period. His death took place at an advanced age in 1306. "He died," says Wadding, "like the swan, singing, — having composed several Hymns just before his death."

The number of Translations made of the Stabat Mater is scarcely exceeded by that of the Dies Iræ. Lisco, in his work devoted to this Prosa, gives or makes mention of eighty-three in all, complete and incomplete. With the exception of four done in Dutch, these are all German. A similar collection of English versions, although comparatively few in number, would not be without interest. In attempting to add another to those already existing, the present Translator has been moved by a desire to produce one more literal, if possible, than any he has seen. He is not, he confesses, friendly to free translations. Free, he has often observed, is another name for false. A counterfeit is put in the place of the genuine; so that instead of a Stabat we get only some worthless substitute. He honors that painstaking religious scrupulosity which respects the sacredness of words as well as thoughts; and shuns all sacrilegious license and profane handling, — carry-

ing this reverence for the venerated text so far as to be unwilling, if it can possibly be helped, to vary one jot or tittle, either in the way of substitution or alteration.

He has no patience with that preposterous conceit, sufficiently common, which imagines itself competent to improve on great originals — whether for that matter these be in a foreign tongue or the vernacular, and so applies to all tamperings with English hymns as well. It is much, he considers, as if some absurd novice of the brush should undertake with a presumptuous hand to retouch a Raphael; or an irreverent stone-cutter, by the clumsy use of his chisel, to improve a Venus de Medicis, or an Apollo Belvedere; or some ignorant devotee to make some fine statue of the Virgin finer by puerile adornments of dress, trinkets, and glass beads. If the use of means adapted to degrade a masterpiece to the level of an image be accounted a sin and an outrage, it is difficult to see why the impertinences of the cheap embellishments of every would-be translator of famous originals, who aspires to be fine rather than faithful, should not be regarded as equally criminal. It may

be, as Dryden says, "*almost* impossible to translate verbally and well ;" but as the portrait of a friend is worthless, however beautiful, unless it be a likeness, so we hold a version must fail of its purpose and be wanting in value, just so far as it is lacking in the essential point of being a faithful representation, both as to form and spirit, of that to which it relates. What is here said, is meant, of course, to apply only to what is deliberately put forth as a veritable translation ; and not to a production which avowedly uses the text merely as a theme, professing and claiming to do no more. In this case one may deviate as he pleases. It is exclusively his own business.

With these views of the duties of a translator, the writer has aimed, however much he may have fallen short, to make his rendering a word for word reflection of the original, so far at least as the rigorous requirements of rhyme and rhythm would allow. For the sake, too, of a closer rhythmic conformity, he has sought even to preserve the musical quadruplications of the female rhymes found in the second and sixth verses. The text adopted is that of the Roman Missal, except in one or two instances where another reading has been preferred.

To make the resemblance between the two Hymns still more complete, the *Stabat Mater*, like the *Dies Iræ*, has been most fortunate in its musical alliances; having been made the theme of some of the most celebrated compositions of the most eminent composers. It was set to music in the sixteenth century by the famous papal chapel master, Palestrina; and his composition is still annually performed in the Sistine Chapel during Holy Week. It is sung likewise in connection with the festival of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin. The composition of Pergolesi, the last and most celebrated of his works, made just before his death and left unfinished, has never, down to the present day, been surpassed, if equalled, in the estimation of critics. It is set for two voices, with accompaniments.

Tieck, in his *Phantasus*, Vol. 2d, p. 438, (edition of 1812,) thus speaks of the composition of Pergolesi and the Hymn itself: "The loveliness of sorrow in the depth of pain, the smiling in tears, the childlikeness, which touches on the highest heaven, had to me never before risen so bright in the soul. I had to turn away to conceal my tears, especially at the

place : 'Videt suum dulcem natum.' How significant, that the Amen, after all is concluded, still sounds and plays in itself, and in tender emotion can find no end, as if it were afraid to dry up the tears, and would still fill itself with sobbings. The poetry itself is touching and profoundly penetrating ; surely the poet sang those rhymes : 'Quæ mœrebat, et dolebat cum videbat,' with a moved mind." It is a tradition, that the great impression which the Stabat Mater of the young artist (Pergolesi) made on its first performance, inflamed another musician with such furious envy, that he struck down the young man as he was coming out of the church. This tradition has long ago been disproved, but as Pergolesi died early, it may, as one remarks, be permitted to the poet to refer to this story, and allow him to fall as a victim of his art and inspiration. He was born 1704-11 at Jesi, and died 1737 at Torre del Greco, at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, where he had retired on account of his weakened health. The recent composition of Rossini is popular and pleasing, but more operatic than ecclesiastical, and so is better suited to the concert-room than the church.

The names of other distinguished composers might be cited, such as Aftorga, Haydn, Bellini, and Neukomm. Aftorga's principal work was his *Stabat Mater*, the MS. of which is still preserved at Oxford, he having lived a year or two in England. He was a native of Sicily, and died in 1755. Haydn's was published in the year 1781.

We give below a condensed view of the various readings taken from *Lisco*; and as the Hymn is usually divided into three-line Strophes, making in all twenty, the references will be to these:—

Strophe 2, line 2. *Contristatam — Contristantem.*

4, " 2. *Et tremebat — Pia mater — Dum videbat et tremebat.*

5, " 2. *Christi matrem si — Matrem Christi cum.*

5, " 3. *In tanto — tanto in.*

6, " 1. *Quis non possit — Quis non potest — Quis possit non.*

8, " 1. *Videns — Vidit.*

8, " 2. *Morientem — Moriendo.*

8, " 3. *Dum emisit — amisit.*

9, " 1. *Pia mater — Eja mater.*

10, " 3. *Ut tibi — Et tibi; ut tibi; ut ipsi; tibi ut.*

11, " 3. *Valide — vivide.*

12, " 2. *Jam dignati — Tam dignati.*

- Strophe 12, line 3. *Pœnas pro me — Pœnas mecum.*
- 13, " 1. *Fac me vere tecum — Fac me tecum pie.*
- 14, " 2. *Te libenter — Et me tibi — Tibi me consociare.*
- 14, " 3. *In planctu — Cum planctu.*
- 15, " 2. *Mihi jam — Mihi tam.*
- 16, " 2. *Suæ sortem — Fac consortem.*
- 16, " 3. *Plagas recolere — Plagis te colere.*
- 17, " 2. *Cruce hac — Cruce fac me hac beari — Cruce fac.*
- 17, " 3. *Ob amorem — Et cruore.*
- 18, " 1. *Inflammatum et accensum — Flammis urare (ne urare) succensum.*
- 20, " 3. *Gloria — Gratia.*

The *Stabat Mater* of Haydn has this for the eighteenth Strophe : —

*Flammis orci ne succendar
Per te, virgo, fac, defendar,
In die iudicii.*

The *Carmelite Missal* gives for the nineteenth Strophe the following : —

*Christe, cum sit hinc exire
Da per matrem me venire
Ad palmam victoriæ.*

The change made in some copies of the seven-

teenth Strophe, of the original "*Cruce hac inebriari,*" into "*Cruce fac me hac beari,*" is significant of some exception having been taken to the great strength, not to say the audacity, of the author's metaphor, — the drunkenness of love.





SEQUENTIA DE SEPTEM DOLORIBUS
BEATÆ VIRGINIS.

I.



TABAT Mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lachrymosa
Quâ pendebat Filius ;
Cujus animam gementem,
Contristantem et dolentem,
Pertransivit gladius.

II.

O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater Unigeniti !
Quæ mœrebat et dolebat
Et tremebat, cum videbat
Nati pœnas Inclyti.



HYMN OF THE SORROWS OF MARY.

I.

STOOD th' afflicted Mother weeping,
Near the cross her station keeping,
Whereon hung her Son and Lord;
Through whose spirit sympathizing,
Sorrowing and agonizing,
Also passed the cruel sword.

II.

O how mournful and distressed
Was that favored and most blessed
Mother of the Only Son!
Trembling, grieving, bosom heaving,
While perceiving, scarce believing,
Pains of that Illustrious One.

III.

Quis est homo, qui non fleret,
Matrem Christi si videret
In tanto supplicio?
Quis non posset contristari
Piam matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum Filio?

IV.

Pro peccatis suæ gentis *
Vidit Jesum in tormentis
Et flagellis subditum;
Vidit suum dulcem natum
Morientem, desolatum,
Dum emisit spiritum.

V.

Pia Mater, fons amoris !
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.
Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum
Ut Sibi complaceam.

III.

Who the man, who, called a brother,
Would not weep, saw he Christ's mother
 In such deep distress and wild?
Who could not sad tribute render
Witnessing that mother tender
 Agonizing with her Child?

IV.

For His people's sins atoning
Him she saw in torments groaning,
 Given to the scourger's rod;
Saw her darling Offspring, dying
Desolate, forsaken, crying,
 Yield His spirit up to God.

V.

Make me feel thy sorrows' power,
That with thee I tears may shower,
 Tender Mother, fount of love!
Make my heart with love unceasing
Burn towards Christ the Lord, that pleasing
 I may be to Him above.

VI.

Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide.
Tui nati vulnerati,
Tam dignati pro me pati
Pœnas mecum divide.

VII.

Fac me tecum vere flere,
Crucifixo condolere,
Donec ego vixero.
Juxta crucem tecum stare,
Te libenter sociare,
In planctu desidero.

VIII.

Virgo virginum præclara,
Mihi tam non sis amara,
Fac me tecum plangere ;
Fac ut portem Christi mortem,
Passionis fac consortem,
Et plagas recolere.

VI.

Holy Mother, this be granted,
That the Slain One's wounds be planted
Firmly in my heart to bide.
Of Him wounded, all astounded, —
Depths unbounded for me sounded, —
All the pangs with me divide.

VII.

Make me weep with thee in union ;
With the Crucified, communion
In His grief and suffering give :
Near the cross with tears unfailing
I would join thee in thy wailing
Here as long as I shall live.

VIII.

Virgin of all virgins dearest !
Be not bitter when thou hearest,
Make thou me a mourner too ;
Make me bear about Christ's dying,
Share His passion, shame defying,
All His wounds in me renew :

IX.

Fac me plagis vulnerari,
Cruce hac inebriari
Ob amorem Filii.
Inflammatum et accensus,
Per te, Virgo, sum defensus
In die Judicii.

X.

Fac me cruce custodiri;
Morte Christi præmuniri,
Confoveri gratia.
Quando corpus morietur,
Fac ut animæ donetur
Paradisi gloria.



IX.

Wound for wound be there created ;
With the Crofs intoxicated
For thy Son's dear sake, I pray —
May I, fired with pure affection,
Virgin, have through thee protection
In the solemn Judgment Day.

X.

Let me by the Crofs be warded,
By the death of Christ be guarded,
Nourished by divine supplies.
When the body death hath riven,
Grant that to the soul be given
Glories bright of Paradise.





REMARKS.

NO admiration of the lyric excellence of the Stabat Mater should be allowed to blind the reader to those objectionable features which must always suffice, as they have hitherto done, to exclude it from every hymnarium of Protestant Christendom. For not only is Mary made the object of religious worship, but the incommunicable attributes of the Deity are freely ascribed to her. Her agency is invoked as if she were the third person of the Trinity, or had powers coördinate and equal.

Plainly it is the province of the Holy Ghost, and not of any creature, to “work in us to will and to do;” to effect spiritual changes; to “take of the things of Christ and show them unto us,” — and yet these are the very things which she herself is asked to accomplish for the suppliant. “Fac,” alone, aside

from potential equivalents, is used at least nine times, — a form of expression manifestly inappropriate unless addressed to one capable of acts causal and original and therefore divine. Not content, it seems, with making her a fountain of supernatural influence, a succedaneum of the Holy Ghost, her efficiency is extended to the performance likewise of the work assigned to the Son, —

Per te, Virgo, sum defensus

In die Judicii, —

an expression of reliance on her rather than on Him to ward off in that day the demands of divine justice. Mariolatry here culminates. It could not well be carried farther.

Considering that the position here given to the mother of Christ receives not a particle of countenance anywhere in the New Testament, one is led to wonder how those who accepted its teachings could ever have fallen into so awful an error. If prayer of any kind addressed to her were laudable or lawful, how can it be explained that all the sacred writers are so intensely reticent upon the point that it is not possible to find written so much as a single

syllable to authorize it, or a solitary example to sanction it? It is remarkable that Christ, while here on earth, did not hesitate to rebuke His mother on a certain occasion when she manifested a disposition to intrude her maternal human relation into the sphere of His divinity, saying: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" At another time, upon being told that His mother and His brethren stood waiting without, He said, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" and stretching forth His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold, my mother and my brethren? For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

Everybody must feel that there is a sublime propriety in this declarative postponement, once for all, of fleshly relationships to the spiritual; and that it would be infinitely unbecoming in Him, who is the Creator of all and the Judge of all, to be a respecter of persons, swayed as men are swayed by the fond partialities of blood and kindred. Upon this principle it is easy to account for the slight mention made of Christ's mother in the Evangelists, and the entire

absence of any allusion to her in the rest of the New Testament. Even the Apostle John, to whose loving care she was committed, and who took her to his own house, neither in his Epistles nor in the Apocalypse names her so much as once. Paul, the most voluminous of the New Testament writers, is wholly silent in regard to her.

When the people of Lystra were making ready to pay divine honors to Barnabas and Paul, they, hearing of it, "rent their clothes, and ran among the people, crying out and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things?" If these revolted at the idea of being made the objects of religious worship, can we suppose that supreme form of it less shocking to the soul of Mary, which is necessarily implied in addressing her as the omniscient and omnipresent hearer and answerer of prayer? Such honor is dishonor. It is an offering of robbery. It robs God.

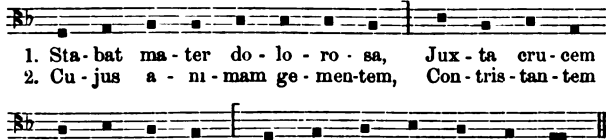


STABAT MATER.

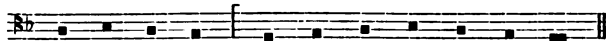
(SUNG ON EVERY FRIDAY DURING LENT.)

No. 1. *As sung in the Churches at Rome.*

GREGORIAN CHANT.
From the "Catholic Psalmist."



1. Sta-bat ma-ter do-lo-ro-sa, Jux-ta cru-cem
2. Cu-jus a-ni-mam ge-men-tem, Con-tris-tan-tem



la-cry-mo-sa, Qua pen-de-bat fi-li-us.
et do-len-teu, Per-tran-si-vit gla-di-us.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3. O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater Unigeniti! | 12. Tui nati vulnerati
Tam dignati pro me pati
Pœnas mecum divide. |
| 4. Quæ mœrebat et dolebat
Et tremebat cum videbat
Nati pœnas inelyti. | 13. Fac me tecum pie flere
Crucifixo condolere
Donec ego vixero. |
| 5. Quis est homo, qui non fletet,
Matrem Christi si videret
In tanto supplicio! | 14. Juxta crucem tecum stare
Et me tibi sociare
In planctu desidero. |
| 6. Quis non posset contristari,
Piam matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum filio. | 15. Virgo virginum præclara
Mihi tam non sis amara,
Fac me tecum plangere. |
| 7. Pro peccatis suæ gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis
Et flagellis subditum. | 16. Fac ut portem Christi mortem
Passionis fac consortem
Et plagas recolare. |
| 8. Vidit suum dulcem natum
Morientem, desolatum
Dum emisit spiritum. | 17. Fac me plagis vulnerari
Cruce hac inebriari
Ob amorem filii. |
| 9. Pia mater, fons amoris!
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam. | 18. Inflammatus et accensus
Per te, virgo, sum defensus
In die judicii. |
| 10. Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum,
Ut Sibi complaceam. | 19. Fac me cruce custodiri
Morte Christi præmuniri
Confoveri gratia. |
| 11. Sancta mater, istud agas
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide. | 20. Quando corpus morietur
Fac ut animæ donetur
Paradisi gloria. |

STABAT MATER.—Chant for Four Voices.

No. 2.

NOVELLO. From "Evening Service."

Sta-bat ma-ter do-lo-ro-sa Jux-ta cru-cem

la-cry-mo-sa, Qua pen-de-bat fi-li-us. *tr*

No. 3.

"Rohr's Collection."

Stabat ma-ter do-lo-ro-sa Jux-ta cru-cem

la-cry-mo-sa, Qua pen-de-bat fi-li-us.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FRONTISPIECE.

THE "Dies Iræ" of painting by the greatest of painters, Michel Angelo's famous fresco of the *Last Judgment*, confessedly the most extraordinary picture in the history of Art, occupies the end wall of the Sistine Chapel at Rome, and is forty-five feet wide by fifty-seven feet high. It was completed and first thrown open to the public on Christmas Day, 1546. The artist was then in his sixty-seventh year, and had been employed on the paintings and cartoons nearly nine years. "We have seen," says one, "Michel Angelo, and he is terrible." In the centre of this vast composition, consisting of at least two hundred figures in every conceivable attitude, appears the majestic form of the Saviour in the act of pronouncing sentence upon the wicked, "Depart," etc. By his side is the Virgin. Near her, towards the right, is a figure with the back turned, done in the style of the finest antique; and next beyond is Adam, expressing by the contour of his members and his relaxed muscles extreme old age. Between these two, half-way down, can be seen a face, with long flowing beard, answering to our idea of an ancient patriarch. Farther to the right is a woman, designed with exquisite grace and elegance, with a young girl clinging to her and hiding her face in terror. On the left of the Saviour, the stopping figure is Peter, in the act of surrendering the keys; the face close to his is Moses. The group behind represents the prophets in studied and striking attitudes. Below are the martyrs, with the symbols of their sufferings. Just at the feet of the Virgin is St. Lawrence, with his gridiron (*la graticola*); then comes St. Bartholomew, with a knife in one hand and his skin in the other; St. Catharine is known by her broken wheel; St. Hippolytus, by his currycombs with iron teeth; St. Sebastian, by his arrows held in his left hand. Higher up is St. Andrew on a cross, a fine figure. Above and around is an innumerable company of the blessed. In the angles at

DESCRIPTION OF THE FRONTISPIECE.

the highest part are angels, bearing, on one side, the cross, the crown of thorns, the dice used in casting lots on Christ's garment; and on the other, the pillar of scourging, etc. Far below is another group of angels, blowing seven trumpets to wake the dead, two of them holding in their hands the books of life and death. At the right, near the bottom, are seen the dead in all stages of decay, quickened and slowly rising,—saints and angels assisting the righteous in their ascent to heaven. In one case a demon makes contest for possession. On the left is presented the terrific spectacle of the condemned dragged down by demons,—among them, a wicked pope, with the keys in his hand, falling headlong the prey of exultant fiends; also a licentious cardinal, a living contemporary of the artist. "Forms and faces," says one, "more trembling and convulsed with despair were never embodied or conceived." Charon, the infernal ferryman, in accordance with Dante's description,—

"With eyes of burning coal, collects them all,
Beckoning, and each that lingers with his oar
Strikes." *Inferno*, Canto iii. vv. 102-104.

In the extreme left corner, at the lowest point, are two heads, "one a cowl unto the other," borrowed likewise from Dante,—Count Ugolino gnawing the skull of his enemy:—

"Upon the wretched skull his teeth
He fastened, like a mastiff's, 'gainst the bone
Firm and unyielding."

Inferno, Canto xxxiii. vv. 74-76.

Close by is Midas, with ass's ears and serpent around the body,—a likeness of, it is said, and a savage satire upon, Meiser Biaggio, his critic. At the foot of the picture, in the middle, is the pit of hell, with demons at its mouth.—The miniature copy here given, photographed from an outline engraving by Piroli, first published at Paris in 1808, faithful and full, down to the minutest anatomical details, was deemed not an inappropriate embellishment to this volume. If desired, it can be indefinitely magnified by a glass.



tabat ater

(SPECIOSA)

HYMN OF THE JOYS OF MARY

TRANSLATED BY

ABRAHAM COLES, M. D., PH. D.

With Photograph



NEW YORK
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
1868

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1867, by
ABRAHAM COLES,
in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the District of
New Jersey.



STABAT MATER

(SPECIOSA).

DR. PHILIP SCHAFF — whose voluminous contributions to the literature and history of the Christian Church reflect the highest honor upon American scholarship — in a recent number of “Hours at Home” (May, 1867), has, thanks to an eye that nothing escapes, been at the trouble of reproducing, with learned and instructive comments for the benefit of readers on this side of the Atlantic, a newly discovered STABAT MATER, being a Nativity Hymn, written it is supposed by the same hand as the Passion Hymn, so that hereafter, as he remarks, there will be two Stabats — the *Stabat Mater Dolorosa*, and the *Stabat Mater Speciosa*; the one setting forth the Joys, the other the Sorrows, of the Virgin Mother at the Manger and the Cross.

The revival of this long-lost Hymn in our time, after five centuries of forgetfulness, is due to A. F. Ozanam, who, in a work on the Franciscan Poets ("Les Poètes Franciscains en Italie au XIII^e siècle, avec un Choix de petites Fleurs de Saint François, trad. de l'Italien," Paris, 1852), has given it once more to the world. Hitherto there have been but two translations of the Hymn — one into German, by Cardinal Diepenbrock; the other, into English, by Neale, made just before his death. This Dr. Schaff copies in the article referred to. Both Ozanam and Neale assume an identity of authorship for the two: and Neale infers, from the want of finish and the imperfect rhymes, that the *Mater Speciosa* was composed first; but we entirely agree with Dr. Schaff in thinking that internal evidence, alone, makes it certain that this is not the case. Ingenious and exact as is the parallel, it is easy enough to see which was first and which was second. If twins, the *Mater Dolorosa* must have been the elder. It is impossible that "Pertransivit jubilus" was written before "Pertransivit gladius."

But we doubt, we confess, a simultaneous birth,

or even a common parentage. In the absence of historical proof, we should think it far more probable, that the *Mater Speciosa* was the work of some admiring imitator, after the other had become famous ; who, not fully satisfied with his performance, was waiting to give it its final touches when he should have decided between this and that ; which explains the supernumerary lines appended to the eighth strophe.* Assuming the priority of the *Mater Dolorosa*, about which there cannot be a particle of doubt, it is difficult to conceive that the other could have been the work of the same pen. It is only the celebrity of an original which invites parody. A man would hardly be a model to himself. True merit, if not unconscious, is usually modest, and it is not likely that our author, at the time he wrote, placed any special value upon his production ; much less foresaw its after success. Why then should he, in preparing a hymn on the Nativity, preposterously seek to tie himself down to the use of the self-same

* "Hunc ardorem fac communem
Ne me facias immunem
Ab hoc desiderio."

words and order of words which he had happened to employ in composing a hymn on the Crucifixion? After this had grown into public favor, it is easy to understand, how some one else, other than the author, should be prompted to attempt so curious and difficult a task, because the verbal semblance would aid, by association, in exciting similar emotions of reverent interest and sympathizing tenderness. It is right to state, however, that opposed to this conclusion is the historical testimony of a second edition of the Italian Poems of Jacopone (Laude di Frate Jacopone da Todi), published at Brescia, in 1495, which contains, in an appendix, several Latin poems ascribed to him; among which, according to Brunet, are found both this *Mater Speciosa*, and the *Mater Dolorosa*, as well as the *De Contemptu Mundi*. There may be other evidence in support of this opinion, of which we are ignorant; but as the case stands, we are compelled to adhere to the belief of a twofold authorship; and accept the above only as supplying proof of the earliness of its origin.

That the new found Stabat is not wanting in those qualities which have attracted to its illustrious pro-

totype the admiring regards of men through so many generations, testifies to the skill of the writer. The structural correspondence between the two is kept up throughout. Grief and gladness are seen to go hand in hand, singing as they go, to the same sweet time and measure. Were it only poetry and not prayer — mere apostrophe and not religious homage — we would be content ; but, alas ! there clings to one and the other the fatal taint of idolatry ; and we are not permitted to wink out of sight so unspeakable an offense against the purity of the unshared worship of the infinite Jehovah.

Happily we have other hymns on the Nativity, against which this objection does not lie. Milton's, for example, the grandest of them all, is wholly to "the Infant God," not the human mother. It divides not its worship. It sings and celebrates but the One, and "prevents" the dawn and "the startled wizards," that it may be first with its exclusive offering "to lay it lowly at His blessed feet." Two simple and sweet lines at the close comprise all that is said of the virgin mother :

" But see, the virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest."

They stand prefixed to the Cradle Hymn of Mrs. Browning, and may have suggested that divine lullaby, "The Virgin Mother to the Child Jesus." It is too long to give entire, but a ricochet extract may suffice to exhibit its general scope, and furnish material for an interesting and instructive comparison with its mediæval rival :

"Sleep, sleep, my Holy One !
 My flesh, my Lord ! — what name ? I do not know
 A name that seemeth not too high or low,
 Too far from me or heaven.
 My Jesus, *that* is best ! that word being given
 By the majestic angel whose command
 Was softly as a man's beseeching aid,
 When I and all the earth appeared to stand
 In the great overflow
 Of light celestial from his wings and head —
 Sleep, sleep, my Saving One !
 And art Thou come for saving, baby-browed
 And speechless Being — art Thou come for saving ?

 Art come for saving, O my weary One ?
 Perchance this sleep, that shutteth out the dreary
 Earth-sounds and motions, opens on Thy soul
 High dreams on fire with God.

Suffer this mother's kifs,
Best thing that earthly is.

.
Thus noiseless, thus. Sleep, sleep my dreaming One !

.
I 'm 'ware of you, heavenly Presences !

.
Unsunned i' the sunshine ! I am 'ware. Ye throw
No shade against the wall !

.
I fall not on my sad clay face before ye —
I look on His.

.
Ye are but fellow-worshippers with me !

Sleep, sleep, my worshipped One !

We sate among the stalls of Bethlehem.

The dumb kine from their fodder turning them,
Softened their horny faces.

.
The simple shepherds from their star-lit brooks,
Brought visionary looks,

As yet in their astoned hearing rung

The strange sweet angel-tongue.

The magi of the East, in sandals worn
Knelt reverent.

.

So let all earthlies and celestials wait
 Upon Thy royal state.
 Sleep, sleep my kingly One !

.
 I am not proud — *not proud !*
 Albeit in my flesh God sent His Son,
 Albeit over Him my head is bowed
 As others bow before Him, still my heart
 Bows lower than their knees. O centuries,

.
 Whose murmurs seem to reach me while I keep
 Watch o'er this sleep —
 Say of me as the Heavenly said, 'Thou art
 The blestdest of women !' — *blestdest,*
Not holiest, not noblest — no high name
Whose height misplaced may pierce me like a shame,
When I sit meek in heaven. For me, for me
God knows that I am feeble like the rest."

.
 We should know that a woman wrote this. It is
 a woman's utterance, and the truer because it is so.
 Great is the mystery of maternity ; great is the joy
 of a mother over her first-born. But, in the ex-
 perience of the mother of our Lord, it was more
 than the common mystery and the common joy.

Heaven had come down to her. She, a lowly maiden, of meek thoughts, living in retirement, had, not long before, been surprised by an angelic embassy, authenticating her as the chosen instrument of a stupendous manifestation, even the revelation of the great mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh, and that flesh her flesh—a holy link born of her miraculous motherhood. She had felt the awe of a wondrous o’ershadowing, and the thrill of a divine quickening, and the joy of a growing burden, and had sung her exultant *Magnificat*, and had been full of wonderings and worshippings, long before the crowning beatitude of the bringing forth, and the seeing, and the hearing, and the laying in the bosom, and the chanting of the *Gloria in Excelsis* of the angels, and the homage of the shepherds, and the prostrations of the magi. Was she therefore proud? Proud! Was she not therefore humble, yea, humbler than the humblest? Who ought to kneel so low as she? O for a humility as deep as the grace is high! No room here for the petty elations of vanity. To conceive of her as sitting queen of heaven, arrogating highest titles, and receiving, well-

pleased, the kneeling homage of men and of angels, — what an indecency! How it vulgarizes and degrades her; such an inversion of nobleness; such an emptying of her true honor and proper glory, which consist in a peerless meekness, bowing ever lower and lower at the footstool, and her heart bowing still lower than her knees! Call me “Blessed,” but call me

“no high name

Whose height misplaced may pierce me like a shame
When I sit meek in heaven.”

There is one other hymn on the same theme by Crashaw, so full of pastoral sweetness, that we cannot forbear transcribing it here. Crashaw, it is said, formed his style on the most quaint and conceited school of Italian poetry — that of Marino; and there is often, it must be admitted, a strained expression in his verses; but there are also many exquisite touches of beauty and tenderness, and a strength withal which more than compensates for an occasional harshness. Of all his writings, he is best known, perhaps, by his version of the *Dies Iræ*. In 1634 he published a volume of Latin

poems under the title of *Epigrammata Sacra*, in which occurs that celebrated verse on the miracle at Cana : —

“Lympha pudica Deum videt et erubuit.”

“The modest water saw its God and blushed.”

It is a curious fact that both Milton and Dryden have each been credited with the authorship of the line as given in English, varied only by the substitution of the epithet “conscious” for “modest.”

His “Hymn on the Nativity as sung by Shepherds,” given below, was probably suggested by Correggio’s far-famed picture in the Dresden Gallery, called “La Notte” (The Night), and forms a fit companion to it. Picture and poem have common attributes, so that it may properly be said, that the one is the other, — that the poem is a picture, and the picture a poem. In both, the form of the Divine Infant is finely imagined as the radiant centre of a supernatural illumination dazzling to all eyes in the picture except those of the virgin mother, while signs of daybreak are seen along the eastern horizon, emblem of “the dayspring from on high :” —

"Gloomy night embraced the place
 Where the noble Infant lay;
The Babe looked up and showed its face —
In spite of darkness it was day.
 We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,
 Bright dawn of an eternal day —
 We saw Thine eyes break from the East,
 And chase their trembling shades away,
 We saw Thee and we blest'd the sight —
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.

She sings Thy tears asleep, and dips
 Her kisses in Thy weeping eyes;
 She spreads the red leaves of Thy lips,
 That in their buds yet blushing lie;
 Yet when young April's husband-showers
 Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,
 We'll bring the first-born of her flowers
 To kiss Thy feet and crown Thy head.
 To Thee, dread Lamb! whose love must keep
 The shepherds more than they the sheep —
 To Thee, meek Majesty! soft King!
 Of simple graces and sweet loves, —
 Each of us his lamb will bring,
 Each his pair of silver doves."

Does the nightingale sing more sweetly?

“ Sweet bird, that shuns the noise of folly —
Most musical, most melancholy.”

In this new attempt to turn the *Mater Speciosa* into English, we have tried, as in other translations, to preserve, as far as possible, the form and spirit of the original. The authorized text of the *Mater Dolorosa*, being that of the Roman Breviary, comprises ten stanzas ; while that of the *Mater Speciosa* has two more, namely, the fifth and eleventh, whose answering stanzas therefore must be looked for in some other text.





STABAT MATER

(SPECIOSA).

I.

STABAT Mater speciosa,
Juxta fœnum gaudiosa,
Dum jacebat parvulus ;
Cujus animam gaudentem,
Lactabundam ac ferventem,
Pertransivit júbilus.

II.

O quam læta et beata,
Fuit illa immaculata
Mater Unigeniti !
Quæ gaudebat et ridebat
Exultabat, cum videbat
Nati partum inclyti.



HYMN OF THE JOYS OF MARY.

I.

STOOD the glad and beauteous mother,
By the hay, where, like no other,
Lay her little Infant Boy :
Through whose soul — rejoicing, yearn-
ing,
And with love maternal burning —
Thrilling passed the lyric joy.

II.

Oh what grace to her allotted,
Blessed mother and unspotted
Of the Sole Begotten One !
Who rejoiced with silvery laughter
As she gazed exulting, after
Birth of her Illustrious Son.

III.

Quis jam est, qui non gauderet
Christi matrem si videret
In tanto solatio ?
Quis non posset collætari
Christi matrem contemplari
Ludentem cum filio ?

IV.

Pro peccatis suæ gentis,
Christum vidit cum jumentis,
Et aliori subditum ;
Vidit suum dulcem natum
Vagientem, adoratum,
Vili diversorio.

V.

Nato Christo in præsepe,
Cæli cives canunt læte
Cum immenso gaudio ;
Stabat senex cum puella,
Non cum verbo nec loquela,
Stupescences cordibus.

III.

Who is he, would joy not greatly,
If he saw Christ's mother, lately
 With such solace happy made?
Who could view without emotion
That fond mother's rapt devotion,
 Playing with her smiling Babe?

IV.

For His people's sins providing,
Christ she saw with cattle biding,
 And exposed to winter keen:
Saw her Darling Offspring, crying
As an infant, worshipped, lying
 In a lodging vile and mean.

V.

O'er that scene surpassing fable,
Sing they, Christ born in a stable,
 Heavenly hosts with joy immense:
Old men stood with maidens gazing,
Speechless at that sight amazing,
 In astonishment intense.

VI.

Eja Mater, fons amoris,
Me sentire vim ardoris,
 Fac ut tecum sentiam
Fac ut ardeat cor meum
In amatum Christum Deum,
 Ut Sibi complaceam.

VII.

Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Prone introducas plagas
 Cordi fixas valide.
Tui nati cœlo lapsi,
Jam dignati fœno nasci
 Pœnas mecum divide.

VIII.

Fac me vere congaudere,
Jesulino cohærere,
 Donec ego vixero !
In me sistat ardor tui ;
Puerino fac me frui
 Dum sum in exilio !

VI.

Make me, Mother, fount of loving,
Feel like force of ardor moving,
 That I thus may feel with thee !
Let my heart with love be burning
That, in Christ my God discerning,
 I approved of Him may be !

VII.

Do this, Mother, be entreated,
Firmly fix His wounds, repeated
 Each in my heart crucified !
Of thy Son — the Heavenly Stranger,
Deigning birth now in a manger —
 Sufferings with me divide !

VIII.

Make me truly share thy pleasure,
Cleave to Jesus and Him treasure,
 While I live and all the while !
Work in me thy love's completeness,
Feast me with thy Sweet One's sweetness
 To the end of my exile !

IX.

Virgo virginum præclara,
Mihi jam non fis amara,
 Fac me parvum rapere !
Fac ut pulchrum fantem portem,
Qui nascendo vicit mortem,
 Volens vitam tradere.

X.

Fac me tecum satiari,
Nato me inebriari,
 Stans inter tripudio ! *
Inflammatum et accensum
Obstupescit omnis sensus
 Tali de commercio !

XI.

Omnes stabulum amantes
Et pastores vigilantes
 Pernoctantes sociant.

* Since *inter* never rules the ablative, Dr. Schaff proposes to read : “ ‘ Stantem in tripudio ! ’ referring ‘ Stantem ’ to ‘ me. ’ ”

IX.

Maid all other maids exceeding,
Be not bitter to my pleading,
 Let me take thy Little One !
Bear the Babe, His sweet smile wooing,
Who in birth wrought death's undoing,
 Giving life when His begun !

X.

Fill me with thy Child's careffes,
Make me, drunk with joy's excesses,
 In thy leaping transport share !
Fired and kindled, struck with wonder,
Let each sense the power be under
 Of such commerce sweet and rare !

XI.

All who love the stable, blending
With the watching shepherds, spending
 All the night, compose one band.

Per virtutem nati tui
Ora ut electi sui
Ad patriam veniant !

XII.

Fac me nato custodiri
Verbo Dei præmuniri,
Conservari gratiâ ;
Quando corpus morietur,
Fac ut animæ donetur
Tui nati visio.



Pray, through strength of His deserving,
His elect, with course unswerving,
May attain the heavenly land !

XII.

Let me by thy Son be warded,
By the word of God be guarded,
Kept by grace, refused to none !
When my body death hath riven,
Grant that to my soul be given
Joyful vision of thy Son !





